AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of the claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of the claims in this application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A verification system ~~for a computer software installation~~, comprising:

a primary library file, the primary library file having a digital signature, wherein the primary library file is a virtual machine dynamic link library file;

a loader program that obtains a digital signature key and further loads the primary library file, wherein, if a public key cannot be obtained via a virtual machine provider, the digital signature key is a hidden public key internal to the loader program and, if a public key can be obtained via the virtual machine provider, the digital signature key is the public key obtained via the virtual machine provider; and

a plurality of secondary files referenced by the primary library file, each of the plurality of secondary files having a digital signature;

wherein the loader program verifies and selectively loads the primary library file by comparing the obtained digital signature key with the digital signature of the primary library file, the primary library file subsequently verifying and selectively loading the plurality of secondary files by calling the loader program to compare the obtained digital signature key with the digital signature of each of the plurality of secondary files, wherein the computer software installation is a virtual machine installation,

at least one tertiary file referenced by at least one secondary file of the plurality of secondary files, wherein after successful verification and selective loading of the at least one secondary file, the at least one secondary file manages the verification and selective loading of the at least one tertiary file,

at least one administrator-configurable file and

the digital signature key comprising a number of keys including a private key provided by an administrator,

wherein the loader program verifies the digital signature of the at least one administrator-configurable file using the private key, wherein the verification system verifies the authenticity of each element of a virtual machine installation and provides security integrity for the virtual machine it installs.

2. (Canceled).

3. (Canceled).

4. (Canceled).

5. (Canceled).

6. (Canceled).

7. (Currently Amended) A verification method ~~for a computer software installation~~, the method comprising the steps of:

launching a loader program arranged to load files;

if a public key is available from an internet site of a virtual machine provider, using the public key as a digital signature key;

if a public key is not available from the internet site of the virtual machine provider, using a hidden key as the digital signature key;

using the loader program to verify the authenticity of a digital signature incorporated in a primary library file by comparing said digital signature with the digital signature key, wherein the primary library file is a virtual machine dynamic link library file;

selectively loading the primary library file in dependence upon the successful verification of its digital signature;

using the primary library file and the loader program to verify the authenticity of digital signatures incorporated in each of a plurality of secondary files by comparing them with the digital signature key; and,

selectively loading the plurality of secondary files in dependence upon the successful verification of their digital signatures~~, wherein the computer software installation is a virtual machine installation~~,

including at least one tertiary file referenced by at least one secondary file of the plurality of secondary files,

the method comprising the further steps of:

after successful verification and selective loading of the at least one secondary file, using the at least one secondary file to manage the verification and selective loading of the at least one tertiary file, at least one administrator-configurable file and the digital signature key comprising a number of keys including a private key provided by an administrator,

wherein the loader program further verifies and selectively loads the digital signature of the at least one administrator-configurable file using the private key, wherein the verification method verifies the authenticity of each element of a virtual machine installation and provides security integrity for the virtual machine it installs.

8. (Canceled).

9. (Canceled).

10. (Canceled).

11. (Canceled).

12. (Canceled).

13. (Original) A computer program element comprising computer program means for performing the method of claim 7.

14. (Previously Presented) The verification system of claim 1, further characterised by: the virtual machine provider is accessed through an internet site to provide the public key.

15. (Previously Presented) The verification method of claim 7, further characterised by: the virtual machine provider is accessed through an internet site to provide the public key.

16. (Canceled).

17. (Canceled).

18. (Currently Amended) The verification system of claim 1 ~~16~~, wherein the loader program is a third-party application that initiates the virtual machine installation.

19. (Currently Amended) The verification system of claim 1 ~~16~~, wherein the loader program is a virtual machine launcher that initiates the virtual machine installation.

20. (Currently Amended) The verification method of claim 7 ~~17~~, wherein the loader program is a third-party application that initiates the virtual machine installation.

21. (Currently Amended) The verification method of claim 7 ~~17~~, wherein the loader program is a virtual machine launcher that initiates the virtual machine installation.

22. (Currently Amended) A verification system ~~for a computer software installation,~~ comprising:

a virtual machine primary library file, the virtual machine primary library file having a digital signature;

a loader program that obtains a digital signature key and further loads the virtual machine primary library file; and

a plurality of secondary files referenced by the virtual machine primary library file, each of the plurality of secondary files having a digital signature;

wherein the loader program verifies and selectively loads the virtual machine primary library file by comparing the obtained digital signature key with the digital signature of the virtual machine primary library file, the virtual machine primary library file subsequently verifying and selectively loading the plurality of secondary files by calling the loader program to compare the obtained digital signature key with the digital signature of each of the plurality of secondary files, wherein the computer software installation is a virtual machine installation, wherein, if a public key cannot be obtained via a virtual machine provider over the internet, the digital signature key is a hidden public key internal to the loader program and, if a public key can be obtained via the virtual machine provider, the digital signature key is the public key obtained via the virtual machine provider over the internet;

at least one tertiary file referenced by at least one secondary file of the plurality of secondary files, wherein after successful verification and selective loading of the at least one secondary file, wherein the at least one secondary file manages the verification and selective loading of the at least one tertiary file; at least one administrator-configurable file; and the digital signature key comprising a number of keys including a private key provided by an administrator,

wherein the loader program verifies the digital signature of the at least one administrator-configurable file using the private key, wherein the system verifies the authenticity of each element of a virtual machine installation and provides security integrity for the virtual machine it installs.

23. (Canceled).

24. (New) The verification system of claim 1, wherein the virtual machine installation installs a Java Virtual Machine.

25. (New) The verification method of claim 7, wherein the virtual machine installation installs a Java Virtual Machine.

26. (New) The verification system of claim 22, wherein the virtual machine installation installs a Java Virtual Machine.